

# **EPA Comments and Responses on Draft (dated July 2020) and Revised Draft (dated September 2020) Sufficiency Assessment River Mile 10 West Project Area Portland Harbor Superfund Site**

**Comments dated October 7, 2020**

This is U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) conditional approval of the Revised Draft Sufficiency Assessment (Revised Draft SA) for the River Mile 10 West (RM10W) Project Area. The RM10W Revised Draft SA was prepared by Stantec Consulting Services, Inc. (Stantec) on behalf of General Electric Company (GE) and dated September 21, 2020. Approval is conditioned on GE adequately addressing EPA's responses as described below.

## **EPA Comments on the Sufficiency Assessment Report**

Unless otherwise noted, GE's responses to EPA's comments on the Draft SA Report and the Revised Draft SA report are acceptable. However, clarification and supplemental information is provided below for the following comments: General Comment 6, Specific Comment 15, Specific Comment 18, Specific Comment 25, and Specific Comment 34.

Additionally, during the August 28 and September 2, 2020 conference calls and in an email from EPA dated August 31, 2020, EPA provided concurrence that some changes requested in comments on the Draft SA can be deferred to later remedial design (RD) deliverables. A summary of those changes is provided below and will be tracked by EPA during future RD deliverables to verify the comments have been addressed as described in GE's responses to EPA comments.

## **EPA General Comment 6 (8/7/20)**

In GE's response to EPA comments, provide an update on the status of GE's outstanding requests for information from parties associated with the project area. The text states that certain parties (e.g., Lindquist Lands LLC and Sause Bros) had not responded to inquiries at the time of the draft SA preparation. EPA appreciates continued efforts to obtain this information and expects that any new information obtained is incorporated into the revised SA.

## ***GE Response (9/21/20)***

Lindquist Lands LLC has responded to GE's request for information about the property since the Draft SA was submitted. The revised Draft SA has been updated accordingly.

GE attempted to contact Sause Bros. by letter, with confirmed delivery, on March 11, May 12, August 14, and September 3, 2020. GE has not received a response from Sause Bros. as of the time of submittal of the Revised Draft SA.

## ***EPA Response (10/7/20)***

EPA understands that GE will continue to seek information about the Sause Bros. site and expects that any information obtained is incorporated into future sufficiency assessment updates and the pre-design

investigation (PDI) work plan, as appropriate. Information added to Section 5.4.3.2 in the Revised Draft SA suggests there may be ongoing activities that could result in the release of contaminants to the Willamette River and identifies what is described as “old underground oil saturation that seeps to the surface occasionally” at the Sause Bros. site. The potential underground oil saturation should be considered in the project area conceptual site model (CSM) and identified as a groundwater/riverbank data gap. The potential underground oil saturation and any subsequent information obtained regarding the Sause Bros. site should be considered during development of the PDI work plan and included in future design documents and the updated SA that will be included in the basis of design report (BODR).

#### **EPA Specific Comment 15 (8/7/20)**

The discussion about DEQ’s conclusion on the stormwater pathway should include the caveat that EPA’s review of DEQ’s stormwater strategy update report identified technical limitations in the evidence presented in the report that limits the scope of the conclusions that can be drawn from the evaluation (EPA 2020). Revise the text accordingly.

#### ***GE Response (9/21/20)***

Sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.5 of the Revised Draft SA has been updated to include the requested information.

#### ***EPA Response (10/7/20)***

Note that the technical limitations identified in EPA’s comment are associated with the analysis in DEQ’s stormwater strategy update report (cited in the Revised Draft SA as “DEQ 2020b”) and not the proposed source control decision for the City of Portland outfalls project (cited in the Revised Draft SA as “DEQ 2020c”). The revisions to Section 5.2.5 in the Revised Draft SA suggest that EPA recommended that City of Portland outfalls are designated as conditionally controlled based on limitations to the DEQ stormwater strategy update report. As described in Specific Comment 33 of the Draft SA, EPA’s recommendation for classifying Outfall 16 as conditionally controlled is based on data and evaluation provided in the proposed source control decision for the City of Portland and is not based on conclusions in the stormwater strategy update report. Section 5.2.5 should be revised in the updated SA that will be included in the BODR.

#### **EPA Specific Comment 18 (8/7/20)**

Revise this section to describe that there is limited sampling data for many of the private outfalls that discharge to the project area. Table 10 indicates that representative post-SCM stormwater data is not available for private outfalls at Dolan Designs, City of Portland Fire Station 06, and Irvjoy 3rd Generation Corp. This data gap should be identified in Section 5.2.6, and the SA should assess whether additional data is needed to address the data gap in stormwater sampling.

#### ***GE Response (9/21/20)***

Section 5.2.6 of the Revised Draft SA has been updated to provide additional discussion of potential storm water data gaps.

#### ***EPA Response (10/7/20)***

The updated discussion of stormwater data gaps is acceptable for the Revised Draft SA. These stormwater data gaps should be reviewed during future updates to the SA and the source control sufficiency matrix to verify that data obtained as part of ongoing stormwater monitoring programs confirms the conclusions in

the Revised Draft SA, and that the stormwater pathway has a low potential for recontamination at the RM10W project area.

#### **EPA Specific Comment 25 (8/7/20)**

The discussion presented in this section should consider the impact of sediment trap deployment location and relative load of sediment during the flow periods evaluated. Sediment that is deposited in the nearshore area on the east side of the river near river miles 11.3 to 11.8 is unlikely to be representative of sediment that could potentially migrate to the RM10W project area.

Additionally, the relative sediment load during the periods evaluated is not discussed. Sediment transport is highest during high flows, and the impact on the variability between high and low flow sediment trap concentrations on potential sediment load to the RM10W project area should be discussed.

#### ***GE Response (9/21/20)***

Sections 6.1.1.1 through 6.1.1.3 of the Revised Draft SA has been updated to consider relative sediment trap deployment locations and sediment loading during differing flow periods.

#### ***EPA Response (10/7/20)***

No additional changes are required for the Revised Draft SA. Evaluation of sediment entering the project area may be considered during the PDI and subsequent RD deliverables. As described in Section 14.2.11 of the ROD, EPA will consider factors such as potential impacts of upstream work on downstream areas when determining remedy sequencing.

#### **EPA Specific Comment 34 (8/7/20)**

This section should be updated as needed to include the uncertainties and data gaps identified in the comments provided herein.

#### ***GE Response (9/21/20)***

Sections 9.2 and 10.0 have been updated to reflect revisions made to preceding sections of the Revised Draft SA in response to EPA's comments.

#### ***EPA Response (10/7/20)***

Uncertainties and data gaps regarding the Sause Bros. site should be incorporated into data gaps evaluated during future SA updates and considered during development of the PDI work plan. Information provided on past spills at the Sause Bros. site in Section 5.4.3.2 of the Revised Draft SA suggests potential site activities and past contamination that could impact the project area. The potential underground oil saturation that is suspected to be the cause of a surface water sheen should be considered a data gap and considered during development of the PDI work plan.

#### **EPA Comments Tracked for Future Deliverables**

The list below provides a summary of EPA comments on the Draft SA that will be addressed during future RD deliverables, as described in GE's responses to EPA's comments dated September 21, 2020. The EPA comment number and the required element to be included in future deliverables are summarized as follows:

- **General Comment 4 and Specific Comment 35:** Screen available RM10W Project Area data against the COC's listed in Table 17 and Table 21 of the ROD (EPA 2017).
- **Specific Comment 4:** Evaluate bathymetric changes across multiple bathymetric surveys (e.g., 2002, 2003, 2004, 2009, 2011, and 2018)
- **Specific Comment 13:** Tabulate all available riverbank soil data and screen against ROD Table 17 CULs for riverbank soil/sediment, remedial action levels (RALs), and principal threat waste (PTW) concentrations.
- **Specific Comment 22:** Review existing pollution prevention plans (when available) for active overwater operators to support evaluation of potential for recontamination from overwater activities.
- **Specific Comment 32:** Obtain additional information on Sulzer Pumps docks to support the assessment of the functionality and safety of the docks, which will inform sampling design and decision-making regarding the technology application decision tree shown on Figure 28 of the ROD.
- **Editorial Comment 11:** Revise sediment trap figures to identify which sediment traps were deployed near the east and west shores of the river.

## References

EPA. 2017. *Record of Decision, Portland Harbor Superfund Site, Portland, Oregon.*